



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**Alaska Workforce Investment Board
Workforce Readiness and Employment and Placement Committee
Thursday April 2, 2009 at 3:00 pm
1016 W. 6th Ave. Suite 304
Minutes (Final)**

Roll Call:

Board Members:

☒ Doug Ward, Chair; ☐ Sharlene Berg; ☒ John Cannon; ☒ Kathy Craft; ☐ Tony Delia; ☐ Jim Laiti; ☒ John MacKinnon; ☒ Dave Rees; ☐ Paulette Schuerch; ☐ Fred Villa; ☒ Michelle Zenger ☒ Marcia Olson

Recurring Guests:

☐ Bob Cress, CEF Training Director; ☐ Eldon Davidson, SAVEC; ☒ James Harvey, Asst Director Employment Security/DOLWD; ☐ Richard Carlson, Superintendent/Klawock School District; ☐ Russ Thorpe

Guests:

Guy Bell, Tom Nelson, Shelly Wright, Corine Geldhof

Staff:

Louise Dean, Program Coordinator

Note: There was not a quorum at this meeting.

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes

February 24, 2009 – defer to Action Item.

Action Items

1. Review Doug's minutes with committee input
 - a. Approval of Minutes - The minutes will be reviewed by members for their additional comments and added to the next meeting agenda for approval.

Discussion Items

1. Training Plan Templates – Final Editing – Dave Rees indicated the committee had asked for staff help on reviewing the template. He doesn't know where Barb is on cleaning that up. A number of the templates were shared with the



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chamber. They are beginning to look at those for some industries such as retail employment in anchorage. Will go to Policy and Planning Committee after final edits are made.

2. Resolution Process Matrix – This process is a result from the employability skills resolution. Dave suggested following the same path as the training template and give to policy and planning.
3. Programs of Excellence – Fred Villa was not available to discuss. This item will remain on the agenda for the next meeting.
4. Review Strategic Priorities – Doug indicated the committee doesn't have any major projects in front of us. Dave indicated in terms of priorities we didn't look at best practices at one stop centers. This might be an opportune time to get collaborations across the job centers and consistencies. Original strategic position was when we put this together not all job centers were the same, that's why we put that as a priority. Is there a way to get an assessment of what the job centers are doing? Right now recertification tool is utilized for full service one stops, all job centers don't meet criteria, and ESD is developing a tool to use internally and can be shared. There is an opportunity to identify best practices at larger centers and replicate them in the smaller job centers. Tool will look similar to tool used in Fairbanks and will address smaller centers. Jim Harvey can give a report at next meeting for status.
5. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 – Guy Bell gave an overview.

The Governor submitted a number of items to the legislature for approval that are funded under ARRA which were all Capital in nature (bricks & mortar). In addition Department of Labor received approval from the Governor to pay an additional \$25.00 per week in unemployment insurance benefits retroactive to February 2009. Payments will go out as soon as retooling is done to the benefit payment system.

Stimulus Items not included in the Governors bill are summarized as follows. Commissioner Bishop signed a letter of intent to apply for stimulus funds.



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DOL has now been awarded several of these grants. However, expenditure of these monies is subject to Legislative appropriation. We are currently in the appropriation process. Senate and House Finance Committees are evaluating each of these items and determining whether to include in an appropriations bill. Once passed it will be up to the Governor to retain, reduce, or delete them.

1st item is for ESD, Employment and Training Services – This is formula money we receive for job center operations, making transition from unemployment to reemployment. The department is asking for eight additional positions to staff the job centers. There will be upgrades to the labor exchange system (ALEXsys) and general technology improvements. The department will have 2 years to spend the money and wants to spend it on serving people and improving job centers. There are provisions to use merit employees to provide services. It is our commitment when work goes away people will get laid off or will be accomplished by attrition.

2nd ESD, Employment and Training Services, Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) – This program provides employment service for seniors over 55 who fit the low income eligibility requirements. It puts them to work in public and nonprofit organizations with subsidized employment until they transition to unsubsidized employment. This is additional funding to an existing program. This is a match requirement. STEP funds will be used. We are not asking for any general funds. Mature Alaskans Seeking Skills Training (MASK)- will put more people to work through this program since there are more seniors trying to get back into the workforce because of economic times. This service is provided through grantees. Do not intend to add staff for this program.

3rd ESD, Unemployment Insurance Program - All states received a general increase in funding. Alaska received 1.1 million dollars. With this funding basically making technology upgrades to call centers, call routing, auditing software, and Quality Control software.

4th ESD, Business Partnerships - Employment Training Administration has issued 9.2 million dollars to Alaska through formula funding. These are for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) programs and services. This is broken into



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three categories. It includes youth employment, adult services, and dislocated worker services. There is increased funding intended for youth program summer employment opportunities. There is an increase in age limitation from 21 to 24. The focus will be creating summer employment opportunities. Looking to expand for low income 'at risk', adult programs and dislocated worker programs if we can target specific workers to specific training providers. Division of Business Partnerships is considering providing additional funds in ABE and GED to ESD to help support the entire system. Funding was approved and we are waiting on appropriation. The State Two Year Plan needs to be updated by June 30, 2009. The adult program is most likened to the STEP program, being less restrictive. Clients will be served throughout the year and are being counseled to be ready when funding becomes available. The majority of funding is for ITA, tuition fees, tools, uniforms, and in extreme cases will fund transportation costs. In addition, there will be funding available for eligible service providers who conduct the work by sitting down with clients. The dislocated worker program is more stringent, more income connected, used for low income individuals displaced from jobs using rapid response services. The Rapid Response Unit tries to intervene as with the AGRIMUM Inc. plant closure. There will be competitive grants for green jobs and health care. The university is interested in pursuing those. The department doesn't have guidelines yet.

5th Vocational Rehabilitation – Awarded 1.8 million dollars. The intent is to help more people with disabilities gain employment. Our share of the formula funding comes through US Department of Education not Department of Labor. DVR uses a holistic approach to providing comprehensive services to disabled individuals.

6th Trade Adjustment Assistance Program - \$350,000 was awarded. This is for individuals who are at risk of losing their job or lose their job to foreign competition. Eligibility has been expanded to include service sector, still waiting on guidelines. This is for 3 or more employees or a company. There is a possibility of expanding this to include an entire community.



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7th Independent Living money administered by Division of Vocational Rehabilitation - This funding goes to grantees to help them live independently. Goal is to improve quality of life and reduce dependencies.

Lastly there is an Item which is not on list which has caused controversy with other state Governors. This is an incentive to make changes to State unemployment insurance programs to expand eligibility. There is a Senate Bill (SB170) that has been introduced to bring Alaska into compliance with these modernization provisions. In the event we do become compliant the state would receive 15.6 million dollars. The House version is HB212.

6. Funding Summary – Used to assist the AWIB Training Plan Template. Needs to be updated so AWIB can access it to see who is doing what and what the funding amounts are.

Other Items

Guest Interaction – Shelly Wright indicated she and Marty Metiva from Mat Su will lead the trail and get an inventory of who the Southeast regional training centers are and what each is currently offering. They will make recommendations of where funding should go to the AWIB. Dave indicated what Workforce Readiness and Employment and Placement should do once separated into two committees. Doug will bring up Regional Priorities at the next Ex-co meeting.

Adjournment – The discussion ended at 4:15 p.m.